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2015

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of Somerville Maine June, 2015

Somerville, Me.

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SOMERVILLE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Gymnasium at RSU 12 Offices
665 Patricktown Rd
Somerville, Maine
June 13, 2015

MINUTES

ARTICLE 1: To choose, by written ballot, a moderator to preside at the town meeting.

Chris Johnson was elected on June 12, 2015 as moderator to preside at said meeting. Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m., June 13 by moderator Chris Johnson.

Pledge of Allegiance

Moderator followed the Maine Moderator's Manual to conduct the meeting.

ARTICLE 2: To choose, by secret ballot, in accordance with the vote of the Town, the following officers and officials: First Selectman, Assessor and Overseer of the Poor (3 year term); Road Commissioner (2 year term); School Board Director, 3 year term.

Election results from June 12, 2015 were reviewed:

First Selectman: Susan Greer was re-elected with 53 votes, running against Lance Willis with 33 votes

Road Commissioner: Jesse Turner was re-elected with 41 votes, running against Steve Childs with 28 votes, Daryl Horak with 15 votes, and Bryce DeMerchant with 4 votes

School Board Director: Chris Johnson was re-elected with 72 votes.

ARTICLE 3: Spirit of America Award

Third Selectman Darlene Landry presented the Spirit of America Award to the residents of Somerville as a whole, in recognition of their outstanding spirit of community service. Mike Dostie and Ernestine Peaslee accepted the award on behalf of the townsfolk. Chris Johnson read a legislative sentiment in recognition of the town's award, and Kelly Payson-Roopchand presented a copy of her book "Birth, Death and a Tractor" to the town, in remembrance of Donald Hewett who received the award last year and passed away on February 28.

ARTICLE 4: Administration Purposes.

Motion made by Roberta Creamer to raise and appropriate from property taxation for the town administration the sum of \$24,370.00, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Tim Dostie seconded.

Vote on Article 4: 33 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 5: Town Office Operation.

Tim Dostie moved to raise and/or appropriate \$4,100 from property taxation for Town Office operation, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Delbert Chase seconded. Susan

Greer clarified that this entails maintenance on the office, such as fixing the doors and an energy upgrade on the lights.

Vote on Article 5: 32 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 6: Contract Services.

Tim Dostie moved to raise and/or appropriate \$24,200.00 from property taxation for payment of contract services required by the town, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Mike Dostie seconded. In response to a question about the status of the tax mapping, the select board clarified that more work needed to be done in conjunction with the revaluation, which would result in an additional set of maps.

Vote on Article 6: 30 yes, 3 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 7: Salaries and Stipends of Town Officers and Officials.

Mike Dostie moved to raise and/or appropriate \$71,377.00 from property taxation for salaries, stipends, and personnel-related expenses of Town Officers and Officials, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Roberta Creamer seconded. Responding to why there was a \$1,000 increase from last year, the select board identified a cost of living increase for the treasurer and tax collector, and a salary increase for the town clerk.

Vote on Article 7: 31 yes, 2 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 8: Capital Road Construction.

Roberta Creamer moved to expend the funds received through the Local Road Improvement Program (projected to be \$20,000 for the state fiscal year 2016), per the Somerville 5-year Long Range Road Plan. Tim Dostie seconded.

Frank Hample asked for clarification about the long-range road plan. The select board responded that 2 years ago a road engineer had come out to the town, and they had developed a road project in conjunction with the state. This will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Vote on Article 8: 31 yes, 0 no.

ARTICLE 9: Road Construction, Maintenance and Repair.

Mike Dostie moved to raise and/or appropriate \$201,175.00 from property taxation for maintaining and repairing Somerville's roads, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Bruce Dunlap seconded. The select board clarified that these routine maintenance expenses, which include gravel, culverts, ditching, and grading, are traditionally raised from town money. Lengthy discussion ensued about the role of the road commissioner, who was not present, until Geraldine Kimball made a motion to call the vote. With 29 votes in favor, this met the two-thirds requirement, and the vote was called.

Vote on Article 9: 30 yes, 2 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 10: Revenue Collection.

Mike Dostie moved to raise and/or appropriate \$10,300.00 from property taxation for the Collection of Revenue, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Roberta Creamer seconded.

Vote on Article 10: 32 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 11: Health and Safety.

Mike Dostie moved to raise and/or appropriate \$2,435.00 from property taxation for Health and Safety, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Roberta Creamer seconded.

Vote on Article 11: 31 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 12: Grants to Not-For-Profit Community Organizations.

Mike Dostie moved to raise and/or appropriate \$2,687.00 from property taxation for grants to not-for-profit community organizations, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Roberta Creamer seconded. Linda McLean, from MidCoast Maine Community Action noted that they had served three individuals in three families for a \$13,000 value in early head start. Spectrum Generations had served 294 meals to homebound seniors, allowing 12 Somerville residents to "age-in-place." Healthy Kids was currently serving 5 Somerville families.

Vote on Article 12: 33 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 13: Inter-Governmental Transfer

Bethany Crummett moved to raise and/or appropriate \$37,500.00 from property taxation for inter-governmental transfers. Pauline Kibbin seconded. Bethany explained this decrease from the recommended amount because the Fire Department's treasurer's report was not up to standard; Fire Chief Dostie defended his budget, stating that they were following changes recommended by the Department of Labor & MMA to bring their standards up. Heated discussion on both sides ensued, with some concerns expressed about the department's organization and accountability, but also many expressions of appreciation for the work the department does on a volunteer basis. Russell Gates made a motion that the budget be amended back to the recommended amount of \$71,100.00, and Bruce Dunlap seconded. With a vote of 21 to 11, the motion to amend back to the original amount carried.

With the original article again before the voters, the vote proceeded.

Vote on Article 13: 22 yes, 11 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 14: Fund balances to be carried forward.

Geraldine Kimball moved to accept the article as written, allowing the Selectmen to carry balances forward to the coming year on certain accounts. Roberta Creamer seconded. The select board clarified that these were accounts such as animal control and emergency management.

Vote on Article 14: 26 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 15: Unanticipated Expenses and Emergencies.

Mike Dostie moved to appropriate \$20,000.00 from surplus to meet unanticipated expenses and emergencies as they deem advisable. Roberta Creamer seconded. The select board explained if it is not used, it goes into the general fund.

Vote on Article 15: 27 yes, 1 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 16: Surplus and overdraft accounts.

Mike Dostie moved to authorize that the surplus and overdraft accounts be lapsed to the General Fund. Roberta Creamer seconded.

Vote on Article 19: 25 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 17: Disposal of real estate acquired by the Town.

Mike Dostie moved to sell and dispose of any real estate acquired by the Town for the non-payment of taxes thereon, and to execute quit claim deeds for such property. Roberta Creamer seconded.

Vote on Article 20: 31 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 18: Funds to pay for sale of Town -acquired property.

David Greer moved to appropriate money from the sale of any Town acquired property to pay the costs of said sale. Mike Dostie seconded.

Frank Hample suggested that the language of the article be changed from "appropriate" to "expend." David Greer made a motion to amend the article thus, and Mike Dostie seconded. With no objection, there was a unanimous vote to amend.

Vote on Article 18: 29 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 19: Transfer of funds received from the sale of tax-acquired property.

Mike Dostie moved to transfer up to \$10,000 of funds received from the sale of tax-acquired property to the revaluation reserve account and up to \$50,000 to the capital roads construction reserve account. Peggy Dostie seconded.

Katherine Ladd asked how many such properties the town currently had. The treasurer, Geraldine Kimball, replied there were two, one on Somerville Rd, and one on Valley Rd, that there had been no bids on. The town needs to decide on a course of action to dispose of those properties.

Vote on Article 19: 23 yes, 3 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 20: Transfer of funds to the revaluation reserve account.

Katherine Ladd made a motion to transfer \$5,000 to the revaluation reserve account. Valarie Johnson seconded this motion. Residents inquired why the figure of \$20,000. The Select Board responded that this would complete the \$90,000 they had contracted for the revaluation.

Kelly Payson-Roopchand made a motion to amend this to the original amount of \$20,000; David Greer seconded. With a vote of 21 to 4, the motion to amend back to the original amount carried.

Vote on Article 20: 20 yes, 4 no.

ARTICLE 21: Prepayment of Taxes.

Mike Dostie moved to accept prepayments of taxes not yet committed, pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A. 506. Roberta Creamer seconded. A resident inquired about the process, and was told that this is usually from overpayment of a previous year.
Vote on Article 21: 27 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 22: Discount on Taxes.

Tim Dostie moved to allow taxpayers a discount on taxes paid within 30 days after the postmark date on the bill and to set the rate thereof at 2%. Mike Dostie seconded.
Vote on Article 22: 28 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 23: Sets the interest rate charged for late payment of taxes.

Mike Dostie moved to charge an interest rate of 0.583% per month (7% per annum) on all taxes paid after November 15, 2015 and May 15, 2016. Roberta Creamer seconded.
Vote on Article 23: 25 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 24: Use of surplus funds for reduction of taxes.

Katherine Ladd made a motion to authorize the expenditure of up to \$35,000 from the General Fund, for the purpose of reduction of taxes. The moderator interjected that this motion was out of order, as the amount was written into the article, and so cannot be revised. Mike Dostie made a motion to accept the article as written, authorizing up to \$10,000 in expenditures, and David Greer seconded.
Vote on Article 24: 25 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 25: Authorizes receipt and expenditures of grants and other receipts.

Mike Dostie made a motion to accept the article as written, and Roberta Creamer seconded.
Vote on Article 25: 24 - 0

ARTICLE 26: Allows use of funds for matching grants.

Roberta Creamer made a motion to accept the article as written, to allow appropriation of up to \$10,000 for matching grants. Mike Dostie seconded. A resident inquired what would happen if a larger matching amount was awarded; the Select Board replied that they would call a special town meeting.
Vote on Article 26: 24 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 27: Allows distribution of funds from snowmobile registrations.

Mike Dostie moved to appropriate the funds received from the State of Maine from snowmobile registrations, to the Backwoods Bouncers Snowmobile Club for the purpose of maintaining their snowmobile trails. Roberta Creamer seconded. A resident reported that the club is doing a good job of maintaining the trails, but there are still not enough signs. Third selectmen Darlene Landry said she would make sure a list is posted of the club members.
Vote on Article 27: 23 yes, 0 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 28: Adopt the Flood Plain Ordinance.

Mike Dostie moved that the "Somerville Floodplain Ordinance" be enacted. Bruce Dunlap seconded. Resident inquired as to the purpose of the ordinance, and David Greer responded that it was required for residents to be eligible to purchase national flood insurance.

Vote on Article 28: 23 yes, 0 no.

Mike Dostie motioned to adjourn at 11:50 a.m. and David Greer seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Payson-Roopchand
Town Clerk

Approved by Board of Selectmen:

Susan Greer

Don Chase

Darlene Landry